1. An animal cell stably transformed with an expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

i.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

ii.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

iii.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

2. The animal cell of claim 1, wherein said animal cell is from a mammal.

3. The animal cell of claim 2, wherein said animal cell is selected from the group consisting of rabbit, mouse, monkey, dog, pig, goat, and cow.

4. The animal cell of claim 1, wherein said animal cell is from cardiac tissue.

5. The animal cell of claim 4, wherein said animal cell is selected from the group consisting of ventricular and atrial tissue.

6. The animal cell of claim 1, wherein said promoter is capable of initiating tissue-preferred transcription.

7. The animal cell of claim 1, wherein said tissue-preferred transcription is cardiac-preferred transcription.

8. The animal cell of claim 7, wherein said cardiac-preferred transcription is ventricle-preferred transcription.

9. The animal cell of claim 7, wherein said cardiac-preferred transcription is atria-preferred transcription.

10. A transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

i.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

ii.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

iii.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

11. The rabbit of claim 10, wherein said promoter is capable of initiating tissue-preferred transcription.

12. The rabbit of claim 11, wherein said tissue-preferred transcription is cardiac-preferred transcription.

13. The rabbit of claim 12, wherein said cardiac-preferred transcription is ventricle-preferred transcription.

14. The rabbit of claim 12, wherein said cardiac-preferred transcription is atria-preferred transcription.

15. The rabbit of claim 10, wherein said rabbit exhibits altered expression of the heterologous nucleotide sequence.

16. The rabbit of claim 10, wherein said expression is cardiac-preferred expression.

17. The rabbit of claim 10, wherein said heterologous nucleotide sequence comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

a.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:3;

b.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 95% identity to the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:3;

c.) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide having the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:4; and

d.) a nucleotide sequence encoding a polypeptide having at least 95% identity to the amino acid sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:4.

18. The rabbit of claim 17, wherein said promoter is capable of initiating ventricle-preferred transcription and said rabbit exhibits altered myosin isoform expression.

19. A transgenic animal comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

i.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

ii.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

iii.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

20. The animal of claim 19, wherein said promoter is capable of initiating tissue-preferred transcription.

21. The animal of claim 20, wherein said tissue-preferred transcription is cardiac-preferred transcription.

22. The animal of claim 21, wherein said cardiac-preferred transcription is ventricle-preferred transcription.

23. The animal of claim 21, wherein said cardiac-preferred transcription is atria-preferred transcription.

24. The animal of claim 19, wherein said animal exhibits altered expression of the heterologous nucleotide sequence.

25. The animal of claim 19, wherein said expression is cardiac-preferred expression.

26. The animal of claim 19, wherein said animal is selected from the group consisting of rabbit, mouse, dog, pig, goat, cow, monkey, chimpanzee, and sheep.

27. A method of altering expression of a heterologous nucleotide sequence in an animal, said method comprising:

a.) providing a transgenic animal comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

i.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

a.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

b.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in a cell of said animal; and

c.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in a cell of said animal; and

ii.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter; and

b.) determining expression levels of said heterologous nucleotide sequence in said animal.

28. The method of claim 27, wherein said expression is cardiac-preferred expression.

29. The method of claim 27, wherein said animal is selected from the group consisting of rabbit, mouse, dog, pig, goat, cow, chimpanzee, and sheep.

30. The method of claim 27, wherein said expression occurs in cardiac tissue.

31. The method of claim 30, wherein said cardiac tissue is selected from the group consisting of ventricle tissue and atria tissue.

32. The method of claim 27, wherein said expression alters the animal's susceptibility to cardiopathy.

33. The method of claim 32, wherein said cardiopathy is a cardiomyopathy.

34. A method of identifying anti-cardiopathic compounds, comprising the steps of:

a.) providing a first and second transgenic rabbit whose genomes comprise an expression cassette comprising:

i.) a promoter capable of initiating cardiac-preferred transcription, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

a.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

b.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating cardiac-preferred transcription; and

c.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating cardiac-preferred transcription; and

ii.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter;

b.) administering a compound to said first rabbit;

c.) incubating both the first and second rabbits for a period of time; and

d.) monitoring said first rabbit for a modulation of a cardiopathic phenotype in said first rabbit compared to said second rabbit.

35. A transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

36. A transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

37. A transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:2; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

38. A transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

39. A transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:5.

40. A kit comprising a transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

i.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

ii.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

iii.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

41. A kit comprising a transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:5.

42. A kit for performing a method of altering expression of a heterologous nucleotide sequence in a rabbit, said kit comprising a transgenic rabbit comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

i.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

ii.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

iii.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

43. A kit for performing a method of altering expression of a heterologous nucleotide sequence in an animal, said kit comprising at least one expression cassette comprising a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

a.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

b.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

c.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell.

44. A kit for altering an animal's susceptibility to a cardiopathy, said kit comprising a transgenic animal comprising in its genome at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

i.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

ii.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

iii.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating transcription in an animal cell; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

45. The kit of claim 44, further comprising a non-transgenic animal.

46. The kit of claim 44, wherein said animal is a rabbit.

47. The kit of claim 44, further comprising a non-transgenic rabbit.

48. A kit for identifying anti-cardiopathic compounds, said kit comprising a first transgenic rabbit and a second transgenic rabbit whose genomes comprise an expression cassette comprising:

a.) a promoter capable of initiating cardiac-preferred transcription, wherein said promoter comprises a nucleotide sequence selected from the group consisting of:

i.) a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2;

ii.) a nucleotide sequence having at least 90% identity to a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating cardiac-preferred transcription; and

iii.) a nucleotide sequence comprising at least 50 contiguous nucleotides of a nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:1 or SEQ ID NO:2, wherein said nucleotide sequence is capable of initiating cardiac-preferred transcription; and

b.) a heterologous nucleotide sequence operably linked to said promoter.

49. The kit of claim 48, wherein the genomes of said transgenic rabbits comprise at least one stably incorporated expression cassette comprising the nucleotide sequence set forth in SEQ ID NO:5.